

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

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The theme for 2019 is '**Balance for Better**' and posters read '*Better the balance, better the world*'. The reasons for the gender-based inequalities are unreasonable.

The Vedic philosophy attribute 'not-an-at-par' but higher status for women. *Matrimaan pitrimaan aachaaryvaan purusho veda* in the Shatpatha Braahmana (elaborating on the YajurVeda) articulates, in unequivocal terms: "The mother is the first person to have a healthy influence on her children, surpassing everyone else".

History enumerates numerous women as eminent philosophers, scientists, research scholars, business and political leaders. However, the most flourishing roles, which encompass the aforesaid roles are:

- (i) **Kanya**: the intelligent girl with brilliant character, actions and temper;
- (ii) **Duhita**: the daughter who cultivates a radiant personality like the rising sun; who is educated, cultured, multi-skilled and apt to dispel the darkness of ignorance; who has subdued/tamed ego (me, mine & myself), overpowered attachment and hate, and surmounted the fear of death; who abides by the tenets of *dharma* (virtue); benevolent, compassionate;
- (iii) **Maatarah**: the lady who not only gives birth to the child, but more importantly is responsible for moulding the personality of her children to be virtuous in thoughts, speech and actions at all times; who instils her children to put up 100% physical and mental efforts towards realising the goals of human life (righteous living, earnings, enjoyment and deliverance from the cycle of birth & death).

The gender inequalities are the product of men discriminating against women, and often perpetrated condoned by women. International Woman's day is a day to highlight issues that need to be addressed and our achievements in terms of gender equality. Are women and men treated equally wherever we live? It is time to deeply think about how the different genders are treated differently, and to open our eyes ...to address contemporary problems at the root level ...to stop the face-lifting policy of pruning the branches and leaves or embellished wrapping.

Several movements have forced us to rethink our values and policies. Our respect for womenfolk should not be mere words or a one-off, one-day event. It should be a 24x7 concern (round the clock: 24 hours a day and 7 days a week). Let's walk-the-talk!

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